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Director of Central Intelligence

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Current Notes

AMERICAS

Mexico: **President Orders Rebel Leaders' Arrest**

Mexican Federal Judicial Police have arrested eight Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) leaders and, according to press reports, have mounted a manhunt for rebel leader Marcos. President Zedillo justified the moves in a televised address last night in which he revealed Marcos's true identity and the discovery in Mexico City and Veracruz of extensive arms caches and armed EZLN elements preparing for attacks.

— Zedillo stopped short of directing a military offensive but ordered increased patrolling in Chiapas; ***violence could quickly escalate, however, given the Zapatista rank-and-file militancy and ongoing land disputes between peasants and landowners.***

[redacted]

Although Zedillo reiterated the government's commitment to resolving the conflict peacefully, ***the arrest of top insurgent leaders will create a vacuum in the EZLN leadership, seriously complicating future government efforts to renew peace talks.*** Zedillo has pledged to call a special session of Congress to report on the situation and to consider legislation that would provide amnesty to rebels agreeing to turn in their weapons.

— ***Already shaky financial markets almost certainly will react negatively to Zedillo's moves.*** [redacted]